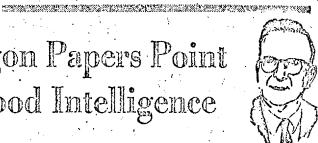
Inside Washington



## Pentagon Papers Point Up Good Intelligence



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WASHINGTON - The U.S. intelligence community often criticized and recently under fire from presidential adviser, Henry A. Kissinger, emerges from the Pentagon study of the Victnam war with its reputation much enhanced.

War critics will complain that, over the years of U.S. involvement, the Central Intelligence Agency is shown to have conducted covert operations in Indochina. Operational responsibill'y for such actions is an old controversy, of course, and those sub-rosa activities were ordered by a succession of U.S. presidents and their National Security Councils.

With respect to its major function, intelligence and its assesement, the CIA proves to have been very perceptive over the Vietnam years. The in ellience analysts read very well the indications of what might develop in Indochina as the United

Specifically, the CIA and the intelligence studies in which CIA participated, rejected the domino theory - the idea that the fall of Vielnam would topple Laos, hen Cambodia and then  $\sqrt{}$  other Asian nations — like a falling row of dominoes. CIA saw limited damage to U.S. interests from a Communist victory in Vie nam.

Additionally, CIA minimised he impact, in Narsh Victram, of a restricted campaign of 'U.S. bombing. It thus dismissed the thesis of Wal, W. Roslow that North Vietnam would be intimidated by the possible loss of i's tiny industrial complex which bad been painstakingly dev toped after the war with the French.

"INDIGENOUS" SUPPORT - Rostow, then a State Department official, offered his thesis in February 1964, when the administration was beginning to stress the controlling role

States extended its commitment. North Victnam in the war in the South. At that time, however, intelligence analyses were reporting that the primary source of Communist strength was "indigenous."

That CIA view, of a revolutionary Communist movement identified with nationalist sentiments carried over from the war with the French, was given little credence by President Johnson and his top aides, according to the Pentagon study.

In June of 1934 President Johnson asked CIA whether the rest of Sou heast Asia would necessarily fall to the Communists if South Vietnam and Laos came trol. That was an occasion on which CIA challenged the domino theory, asserting that "with the possible exception of Cambodia" no ration in the area would quickly fall to the Contn:unists.

administration pol-Again. icy makers were not persuaded, and fears for such nations as Malaysia persisted in high adminstration councils, the Pentagon study reports.

In November of 1964, when the National Security Council was considering plans for carrying the bombing to North Vietnam, it was an intelligence panel including CIA, State Department / intelligence and the Pentagon's Defense Intelligency Agency— which said the plan had little chance of intimidating North Vietnamese.

In the spring of 1965, when the discussions had turned to possible commitment of U.S. troops to offensive combat operations, CIA Director John A. McCone said a change in the role of U.S. troops was inconsistent with the limited tempo of the bombing opera ions then being conducted. He said the proposed air and ground pressures on Hanoi would not be enough.

"In effect," said McCome in an April 1955 memo, "we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win. and from which we will have extreme difficulty extricating ourselves."

STYLE CHANGED -In that memo McCone, the rather dour California industrialist who was brought in to revive CIA after the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion, showed himself to be a full participant in the formulation of U.S. policy. With the benefit of hindsight, one can wish he had been more persuasive.